

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COLOMB 00682 250519Z

ACTION COME-00

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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6770

UNCLAS COLOMBO 0682

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BENC, CE

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: COLOMBO WATER SUPPLY

REF: STATE 038005

1. EMBOFF DISCUSSED PROPOSED IBRD/IDA PROJECT FOR COLOMBO WATER SUPPLY

WITH I. RAJENDRAN, CHIEF ENGINEER OF NATIONAL WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE

BOARD. RAJENDRAN SAID NEGOTIATIONS STILL UNDERWAY BETWEEN IDA AND GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA (GSL) ON SIZE AND DETAILS OF LOAN. GSL REQUIRES \$14 MILLION FOR TOTAL PROJECT, WITH APPROXIMATELY \$12.5

MILLION NEEDED FOR IMPROVEMENT OF WATER SUPPLY AND ABOUT \$1.5 MILLION TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND SEWWEAGE SYSTEM IN COLOMBO AND SELECTED SUBURBS

ACCORDING TO RAJENDRAN, IDA CONSIDERING LOAN OF ONLY \$10 MILLION.

2. GSL TEAM PLANNING TRIP TO WASHINGTON IN MARCH FOR FINAL DISCUSSIONS WITH IDA OFFICIALS. IF IDA PROVIDES ONLY \$10 MILLION, THEN GSL WILL BE LOOKING FOR BILATERAL ASSISTANCE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL \$4 MILLION. CANADA IS ONE POSSIBLE SOURCE, BUT GSL WOULD PREFER OBTAIN FULL \$14 MILLION FROM IDA. UNTIL LOAN AGREEMENT WITH IDA CONCLUDED, IT NOT POSSIBLE TO SAY WHAT ROLE CANADA OR OTHER BILATERAL DONORS MAY PLAY.

3. RAJENDRAN TOLD EMBOFF THAT NO RPT NO CONSULTANTS WILL BE UNCLASSIFIED

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NEEDED FOR WATER SYSTEM PROJECT AS WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD HAS SUFFICIENT EXPERTISE. (GSL AGENCIES HAVE THOUGHT THIS ON OTHER IBRD PROJECTS, BUT IBRD USUALLY REQUIRES SERVICES OF OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS.) WITH REGARD TO SEWERAGE PROJECTS HOWEVER, RAJENDRAN SAID CONSULTANTS WOULD BE NEEDED, BUT SHORTLIST WILL NOT BE PREPARED UNTIL SOMETIME IN LATER PART OF JUNE.

4. WATER/SEWERAGE PROJECT STILL IN FORMATIVE STAGE AND ROLE OF CONSULTANTS VAGUE. AS FAR AS EMBASSY CAN TELL, NO PARTICULAR FIRM HAS INSIDE TRACK AT THIS POINT. LOCAL FIRMS WITH ENGINEERING CAPABILITY INCLUDE: WALKER SONS AND COMPANY, 63/75 SIR BARON JAYATILLEKE MAWATHA, COLOMBO 1; WALKER AND GRIEG LTD., DARLEY ROAD, COLOMBO 10; AND U.N. GUNASEKERA, 19 DEAL PLACE, COLOMBO 3. WTDR'S AVAILABLE ON FIRST TWO FIRMS AND ONE IN PREPARATION TN THIRD. EMBASSY HAS NOT RPT NOT CONTACTED ANY OF THESE COMPANIES TO DETERMINE INTEREST IN JOINT VENTURE WITH US FIRM. WHEN ROLE OF CONSULTANTS BECOMES CLEARER, SUGGEST METCALF AND EDDY AND OTHER INTERESTED US FIRMS REVIEW WTDR'S ON ABOVE MENTIONED LOCAL COMAPNIES AND THEN CONTACT THESE COMPANIES DIRECTLY.
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